

**NOTES ON METHODS
USED TO GATHER AND ANALYZE
INFORMATION INCLUDED
IN THE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT
AND SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS**

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT #13

2005

City of
Indianapolis
Bart Peterson, Mayor



PARENT AND STAFF SURVEYS

The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis administered and collected surveys of parents and staff members at the ten operating Mayor-sponsored charter schools in 2004-05. The Kensington Group, Inc. developed the charter school survey instrument in conjunction with Ball State University's Office of Charter Schools in 2004. The Kensington Group modified the survey for use by Mayor-sponsored charter schools in 2005, tailoring survey questions to measure criteria in the Mayor's Charter School Performance Framework. All ten schools administered the surveys in April and May 2005. Survey responses were confidential; to preserve confidentiality CELL collected the completed surveys, Marketing Research Technologies tabulated the results, and the Kensington Group analyzed the results. A sample copy of the parent and staff survey instrument is available on-line at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Accountability/2005/home.htm>.

Parent surveys

Parent surveys took approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Each family was asked to complete one survey even if more than one child from a family attended the charter school. Schools distributed copies of the surveys on-site during parent-teacher conferences, sent them home with students, and handed them to parents and guardians as they dropped off or picked up their students at school. Parents had the option to complete the surveys at home or at school and to return the surveys either to collection boxes at each school or by mail in envelopes provided by CELL. CELL set a target response rate of 40%, which nine of the ten schools met or exceeded. The table below contains response rates for each school.

Staff surveys

The staff survey took approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Staff members at each of the ten schools completed paper and pencil copies of the

staff survey. Virtually all of the staff members at each school participated in the staff survey.

Survey calculations

Results were rounded to the nearest whole percentage point. Calculations for both sets of surveys do not include missing or "don't know" responses.

Survey analyses and verifications

Dr. Ruth Green, senior fellow for research at CELL, led the overall survey administration. Gail Fox, who holds a master's degree from the University of Indianapolis and is currently a research assistant and project coordinator at CELL, coordinated the survey data collection. Survey data was scanned, verified, and tabulated under the direction of Bob Dicus, President of Marketing Research Technologies. Chris Everett, President of the Kensington Group, Inc., who holds an MBA from California State University, Fullerton, conducted the analysis of the survey data.

A	PARENT AND STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE RATES			
	Parent Survey		Staff Survey	
	Number of Respondents	Response Rate	Number of Respondents	Response Rate
21st Century Charter School	42 families	40%	17 staff members	100%
Andrew J. Brown Academy	175 families	40%	35 staff members	100% ¹
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	70 families	65%	19 staff members	100% ¹
Christel House Academy	98 families	44%	33 staff members	100% ¹
Flanner House Elementary School	70 families	65%	25 staff members	100% ¹
Flanner House Higher Learning Center	19 families	51%	10 staff members	91%
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #1	14 families	38%	12 staff members	100% ¹
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #2	17 families	46%	13 staff members	100% ¹
KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory	42 families	56%	9 staff members	100%
Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence	45 families	49%	17 staff members	100% ¹

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents and staff administered in spring 2005 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis. ■ ¹Based upon available data, the response rate for this school was higher than 100%. The anonymity of the survey prevents tracking specific responses. Therefore, some variation and accuracy in response levels can be expected. The level of staff response reflects this variance and may have occurred due to an inaccurate staff member count, an inadvertent multiple completion of the survey, or an inaccurate recording of a participant's role with the school. These discrepancies have had minor and limited impact on the survey results.

EXPERT SITE VISITS

CELL at the University of Indianapolis developed a detailed protocol to guide expert site visits of Mayor-sponsored schools. The protocol, which addresses the overarching questions outlined in the Charter School Performance Framework, sets forth a detailed schedule for the visits, including lists of questions to be posed to different groups of school stakeholders.

During 2004-05, multi-member expert site teams visited Mayor-sponsored charter schools in their first or second year of operation for one full day in January/February 2005, and again in April/May/June 2005 (note: one team visited Flanner House Higher Learning Center for one day in the winter and two full days in the early summer). Site visit teams also visited the three third-year schools for one day in late spring. Expert site visit team members for the visits

included Dr. Ruth Green of CELL, Dr. Steven Tegarden, former superintendent of schools in Carmel, Indiana and Glastonbury, Connecticut, and current interim superintendent of the MSD of Washington Township in Indianapolis and Ms. Kaaren Rodman, a retired educator and current member of the Mayor's Charter Schools Board. As well, Ms. Christa Parrish, an assistant principal in the Carmel Clay Schools district in Carmel, Indiana, participated in one of the site visits at Flanner House Higher Learning Center. To maintain independent, third-party objectivity, Mayor's Office staff does not participate in the site visits. The site visit team conducted classroom observations, held focus groups with staff, students, and parents, and reviewed curriculum- and business-related items. Additionally, third-year schools began a process of self-evaluation prior to their visit; the site visit

also included activities related to these schools' self-evaluations.

At the end of each visit, the site visit team provided school leaders and the Mayor's Office with feedback based on their observations. Additionally, at the end of the second set of visits, the expert site visit team provided each school with a written report citing commendations and areas for improvement. The Mayor's Office uses the findings in the written reports, along with the other feedback, as the basis for some of the observations on school performance included in this Accountability Report. To maintain independent, third-party objectivity, the Mayor's Office does not participate in the preparation of these reports. A detailed description of the site visit process and protocol is available on-line at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Accountability/2005/home.htm>.

TEST SCORE ANALYSIS

VALIDITY OF NORM-REFERENCED TESTS: NORTHWEST EVALUATION ASSOCIATION MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Measuring school performance fairly is best done through multiple lenses. The Mayor's Office has determined that it should not only look at the performance of students at a given point in time, i.e., the performance of students in a given year on the Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+), but also at the growth or improvement of those students over time.

The ISTEP+ measures of proficiency in math and English provide essential information. At the present time, however, it is not possible for the Mayor's Office to track the progress of individual students from year to year on the ISTEP+. Also, since the five first-year schools had just opened when ISTEP+ was administered in fall 2004, their results did not offer any information from which the Mayor's Office could assess how much children had learned at those charter schools. Instead,

they provided useful information about the starting levels of knowledge and skills of the charter school students.

To ensure that the Mayor's Office, the schools, and the general public have an ongoing sense of the progress of these public charter schools, the Mayor's Office has opted to require its charter schools to administer an additional norm-referenced test in both the fall and spring of each year. The test administered by the Mayor's charter schools, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), is produced by the well-respected Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). The MAP is a battery of tests in several subject areas. This test is administered under uniform conditions in each subject and grade level and produces scores that can be compared to the average scores attained by students across Indiana and the nation as a whole.

State and national averages for the test enable observers to compare a school's students to similar students in Indiana and nationally. NWEA developed its norm groups by extensive sampling of student performance across districts from the major geographic regions of the country, the spectrum of district enrollment, and a broad range of socio-economic status. For example, over 1,050,000 students are included in the most recent norming group. They are drawn from 321 school districts and 24 states, and include 549,268 students tested in the fall of 2000 and 2001 and 621,021 in the spring of 2000 and 2001.¹ Within Indiana, NWEA used a norming sample for reading of 117,095 students in the fall and 65,958 students in the spring.² In short, the Mayor's charter schools used a sound, nationally- and state-normed test that is representative and recent.

¹For more information, please see the Northwest Evaluation Association: RIT Scale Norms (NWEA, August 2002). ■ ²For more information, please see the Northwest Evaluation Association: RIT Scale Norms for Indiana (NWEA, August 2002) and the Northwest Evaluation Association: RIT Scale Norms (NWEA, August 2002).

TEST SCORE ANALYSIS METHODS

To measure the growth of school performance from fall to spring in the Mayor’s charter schools during the academic year 2004-05, the Mayor’s Office enlisted American Institutes for Research (AIR). AIR is a nationally recognized nonprofit research firm with particular expertise in analyzing student growth over time using standardized assessments such as NWEA.

When producing the analysis, a three-step process was implemented for each grade and subject area.

First, AIR identified students who had taken a particular subject test in both fall 2004 and spring 2005. Using those students’ scores only, AIR calculated the difference between the average spring score and the average fall score, by grade and subject area for each school. This difference was deemed the average growth rate for that school in that particular grade and subject.

Second, to provide state and national comparisons, the average growth rates within each subject and grade for a school were compared to the average growth rate for Indiana and the nation, respectively, as reported by NWEA. A statistical test was performed to determine if the school’s

growth rate was significantly different from the state or national average growth rate. If the school’s growth rate was significantly larger than the average, the school was deemed to have “gained ground” compared to peers in the state or nation. If the school’s growth rate was significantly smaller than the average, then the school was deemed to have “lost ground” compared to peers in the state or nation. Otherwise, the school was deemed to have “stayed even.”

NWEA does not provide average growth rates for all grade levels and subjects for both Indiana and the nation. Specifically, average growth rates for Indiana were not available for 2nd, 10th, 11th, or 12th grades. Average growth rates for the nation were not available for 11th and 12th grade or for 2nd grade Language.

Third, a “REACH Ratio” was used to determine the percentage of students in each grade who are on track to be proficient by a certain time. This analysis requires choosing an outcome of value – for example, proficiency by graduation or by a certain grade – and then finding the distance from proficiency for each student and dividing that by the amount of time to reach that level.

For example, if a student in fifth grade is 30 points away from the desired outcome of proficiency by the beginning of 8th grade, the student has two full academic years to grow 30 points (6th and 7th grades). The student therefore needs to grow by 15 points each year. This “REACH score” is then compared to the student’s current estimated growth rate, which in this case is the growth he or she actually achieved between fall 2004 and spring 2005. If the student’s current estimated growth rate is 22.5, then her “REACH Ratio” would be current growth rate (22.5 points annually) divided by the REACH score (15 points needed annually until proficient), a ratio of 1.5. Since this REACH Ratio is greater than 1, this student is exceeding the rate of progress needed to become proficient by grade 8. Any 5th grade student who was already proficient enough to meet the 8th grade proficiency standard would be deemed to have a REACH Ratio of greater than 1 as well.

The percentage of students in the grade who have a REACH Ratio of 1 or greater is then calculated for each grade and subject.

The MAP assessment does not have specific proficiency cut points or performance standards, but it does correlate to the

<div> <div>B</div> <div> EXPLANATION OF HOW REACH CALCULATIONS WERE CONDUCTED For Each Grade Level </div> </div>		
For students in this grade level...	...the student’s 2004-05 growth rate was projected for this many years...	...to determine if the student would be proficient according to Indiana standards by fall of this grade level:
2nd	2	5th
3rd	2	6th
4th	2	7th
5th	2	8th
6th	1	8th
7th	0	8th
8th-12th	Calculation not possible for students in these grade levels because NWEA does not provide Indiana proficiency cutpoints beyond 8th grade	

ISTEP+ test. For example, a MAP score of 217 for grade 8 in Language Arts correlates to a level of “Pass” on the ISTEP.³ These cut points were used to calculate the outcome of value for the REACH Ratio. Last year, the outcome of value for all students was 8th grade proficiency. This year, however, AIR used a different procedure. Projecting to 8th grade was deemed too long a time period for younger

students. As a result, AIR projected no more than two years into the future for any given student. This procedure creates a substantially higher threshold for “sufficient” growth. ■ **CHART B** shows how this calculation worked for each grade. This analysis was not conducted for any grades beyond grade 7 because NWEA does not yet provide ISTEP+ correlated cut points for any grades beyond grade 8.

As a result, REACH percentages were not calculated for the four schools that only have grades 8 and higher: Flanner House Higher Learning Center, Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academies #1 and #2, and Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School. If NWEA makes cut points available in higher grades in the future, the Mayor’s Office intends to perform a similar analysis for these higher grades.

SAMPLE SIZES

■ **CHART C** shows the number of students included in the comparisons of growth rates to state and national averages. ■ **CHART D** shows the number of students included in the calculation of sufficient gains using the REACH method. These numbers are sometimes

larger than the numbers in ■ **CHART C** since some students were included in the REACH analysis because they (a) had spring 2005 test scores, and (b) had already met the future proficiency cut point for REACH. Though no growth data were available for these students,

they were deemed on track to become proficient over time and therefore included in the analysis.

The report only displays results in cases where at least ten students’ results were available for analysis.

■ ³For more information, please see the Northwest Evaluation Association Research Report 2003.3, “Aligning the NWEA RIT Score with the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+),” August 2003.

C

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE CHANGE AND COMPARISON OF GROWTH RATES

Students Included in the Calculation of Average Percentage Change and Comparisons of Growth Rates to State and National Averages by School Subject and Grade Level

	GRADE LEVEL										
MATH	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
21st Century Charter School	23	18	15	20	18	21	9	0	0	0	0
Andrew J. Brown Academy	67	60	59	47	36	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	0	0	53	41	0	0	0
Christel House Academy	48	53	42	25	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flanner House Elementary School	29	26	29	18	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flanner House Higher Learning Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	4	7	3
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	0
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	0	0	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory	0	0	0	73	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence	12	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
READING											
21st Century Charter School	26	17	15	20	17	20	9	0	0	0	0
Andrew J. Brown Academy	66	59	59	47	36	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	38	0	0	0
Christel House Academy	51	53	44	24	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flanner House Elementary School	30	26	29	17	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flanner House Higher Learning Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	3	2
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	34	0	0	0
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	0	0	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory	0	0	0	72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence	12	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LANGUAGE											
21st Century Charter School	26	18	15	20	18	18	9	0	0	0	0
Andrew J. Brown Academy	66	60	59	48	36	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	0	0	0	0	0	0	51	39	0	0	0
Christel House Academy	50	53	42	24	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flanner House Elementary School	30	24	29	17	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flanner House Higher Learning Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	2	4	2
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	0	0	0
Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy #2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	0	0	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory	0	0	0	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence	11	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data," prepared by American Institutes for Research, 2005.

D

NUMBER OF STUDENTS INCLUDED IN THE REACH ANALYSIS By School, Subject, and Grade Level

	GRADE LEVEL					
MATH	2	3	4	5	6	7
21st Century Charter School	23	18	15	20	19	21
Andrew J. Brown Academy	67	63	60	48	39	0
Christel House Academy	48	53	42	25	21	0
Flanner House Elementary School	29	26	29	19	22	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory	0	0	0	76	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence	12	18	0	0	0	0
READING						
21st Century Charter School	26	17	15	20	19	20
Andrew J. Brown Academy	66	65	60	47	39	0
Christel House Academy	51	53	44	24	21	0
Flanner House Elementary School	31	26	29	17	22	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory	0	0	0	72	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence	12	19	0	0	0	0
LANGUAGE						
21st Century Charter School	26	18	15	20	19	18
Andrew J. Brown Academy	67	66	60	48	39	0
Christel House Academy	50	53	42	24	21	0
Flanner House Elementary School	31	24	29	18	22	0
KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory	0	0	0	70	0	0
Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence	11	19	0	0	0	0

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data," prepared by American Institutes for Research, 2005.